

### **REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

The office action of April 12, 2003 has been carefully reviewed and these remarks are responsive thereto. Reconsideration and allowance of the instant application are respectfully requested.

Claims 20 and 24-38 remain in this application. Claims 21-23 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. The limitations recited therein are now recited in amended claim 20. The indication that claims 26 and 36 contain allowable subject matter is appreciated.

The dependency of claims 37 was corrected, hence correcting that of claim 38. Withdrawal of the rejection under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, is requested.

Claims 20-23 and 31-35 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) over US 5,961,798 (Robinson et al.) in view of US 6,132,562 (Baumecker et al.) Claim 20 was amended to recite the limitations formerly recited in claims 21, 22, and 23.

Baumecker issued October 17, 2000 based on an application filed in the United States on February 12, 1999. The present application claims a German priority date of November 11, 1998. Enclosed herewith is a statement for the certified English translation perfecting priority of the instant application. The instant application is the English translation of the priority document. Baumecker is not a reference under any section of 35 USC 102 and should be withdrawn.

Robinson discloses an apparatus for coating articles wherein the articles to be coated are carried on a carousel, which is mounted on a carriage propelled through the sputtering chambers. The carousel is provided with a number of spindles on which the articles are placed. The spindles are rotated by gears, which are with a toothed belt. The toothed belt is driven in rotation.

In contrast, the spindles of the instant claims are in mesh with the racks fixed along the path of the carrier. Specifically, the carriers are elongate and object holders are present on the carriers. The object holders are rotatable and the transport device is adapted to move the carriers substantially in the longitudinal direction and to rotate the object holders in the PVD device. This is a simpler solution and less vulnerable to the environment which may pollute the objects.

Robinson does not teach or suggest the apparatus of independent claim 20 (as amended) or dependent claims 31-35. Withdrawal of this rejection is requested.

Claims 24 and 25 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) over Robinson et al. and Baumecker et al. references as previously applied and further in view of US 3,584,847 (Hammond et al.) Claims 24 and 25 depend from claim 20. Robinson does not teach or suggest the apparatus of claim 20 for the reasons identified above. Baumecker is not a proper reference under 35 USC 102 and cannot remedy the defects of Robinson.

Hammond does not remedy the defects of Robinson. Hammond discloses an apparatus containing buffer units. In Hammond, the entrance and exit are spatially separated, which allows the space for buffer units. In contrast, when the entrance and exit are combined, as in the claimed apparatus, space problems are created. The claimed invention is directed to a solution for such space problems when the entrance and exit are combined.

Hammond does not combine the entrance and exit; hence Hammond does not have the problem that the instant invention solves. Thus, one skilled in the art would not have considered Hammond to modify Baumecker to arrive at the apparatus of the instant claims. Withdrawal of this rejection is requested.

Claim 27 stands rejected over the Robinson et al. and Baumecker et al. combination in view of US 4,310,614 (Connell et al.). Claim 27 depends from claim 20. Robinson does not teach or suggest the apparatus of claim 20 for the reasons identified above. Baumecker is not a proper reference under 35 USC 102 and cannot remedy the defects of Robinson.

Connell is applied as teaching an ion air gun. An ion air gun is similar, but not the same as a blower. However, Connell does not teach or suggest replacing the carousel of Robinson with a transport device adapted to move the carriers substantially in the longitudinal direction. Thus, Connell does not remedy the defects of Robinson. Withdrawal of this rejection is requested.

Claims 28-30 stand rejected over the basic combination in view of US 4,853,283 (Skolnick). Claims 28-30 depend from claim 20. Robinson does not teach or suggest the apparatus of claim 20 for the reasons identified above. Baumecker is not a proper reference under 35 USC 102 and cannot remedy the defects of Robinson.

Skolnick is directed to the use of UV-curable lacquer on a light reflective material, which is unrelated to the apparatus of the instant claims. Skolnick does not teach or suggest replacing the carousel of Robinson with a transport device adapted to move the carriers substantially in the longitudinal direction. Thus, Skolnick does not remedy the defects of Robinson. Withdrawal of this rejection is requested.

### CONCLUSION

It is believed that no fee is required for this submission. If any fees are required or if an overpayment is made, the Commissioner is authorized to debit or credit our Deposit Account No. 19-0733, accordingly.

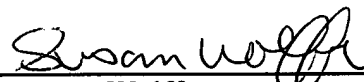
All rejections having been addressed, applicant respectfully submits that the instant application is in condition for allowance, and respectfully solicits prompt notification of the same.

Respectfully submitted,

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